



State Representative Len Greene

LOCAL ISSUES

Route 8 Safety Study

The State Department of Transportation (DOT) has completed a safety study I requested on a dangerous section of Route 8 southbound in Beacon Falls. Since early 2003, there have been four major truck accidents between exits 24 and 25. The study concludes there is a need for further roadway improvements. Proposed upgrades include repaving sections of the highway, additional shoulder improvements, guide rail upgrades and median barrier replacement.

Due to an estimated \$14 million cost, the project has been placed on DOT's future needs list. As an interim measure, DOT will apply a 'Nova Chip' surface treatment on the section of roadway to improve traction under wet conditions. I'm hopeful the DOT, state and local officials can continue to work together with the federal government to help secure the funding needed to reconstruct this section of highway as quickly as possible.

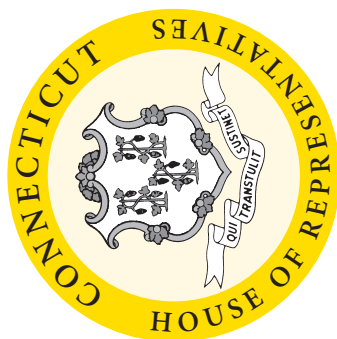


During a ceremony at the State Capitol, Rep. Greene presents a citation to Seymour Animal Control Officer Joe LaRovera (not pictured) and a Stratford Veterinarian who helped save "Amazing Grace," the puppy who was the sole survivor of a brutal attack on her litter last January in Seymour.

100 PERCENT VOTING/ATTENDANCE

Representative Len Greene achieved a perfect voting and attendance record in the state House of Representatives for the 2005 Legislative Sessions. According to a statistical summary released by the General Assembly's House Clerks Office, Rep. Greene is one of only 12 lawmakers to vote on all 460 bills presented on the House Floor during the 2005 legislative sessions. There are 151 members in the state House of Representatives.

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Hartford, CT
Permit #3937



State Representative
LEN GREENE
Proudly Serving the 105th District
Ansonia ★ Beacon Falls ★ Seymour



Representative Len Greene
Room 4200, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

TELEPHONE:
(800) 842-1423

E-MAIL:
len.greene@housegop.state.ct.us

Please visit our website www.housegop.state.ct.us

2005 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



State Representative
LEN GREENE
Proudly Serving the 105th District
Ansonia ★ Beacon Falls ★ Seymour

Representative Greene speaks at a press conference at the State Capitol announcing the introduction of PA 05-269 (details at right).



PUBLIC SAFETY

Increased Penalties For Driving With A Suspended License, And Driving Under the Influence (DUI)

Public Act 05-215 establishes strict penalties for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended driver's license. Under the new legislation, anyone convicted of a second incident of driving with a suspended license will serve a mandatory 30 day jail sentence. The court can also impose additional penalties for repeat offenses. In addition, current law requires an administrative license suspension process for drivers who refuse to submit to a blood alcohol test or whose test results indicate an elevated BAC (.08% or more or .02% or more if the driver is under age 21). The new law doubles the license suspension periods if the offender is under age 21. This increase also applies to nonresident operating privileges.

Graduated Drivers Licenses

The Legislature passed legislation to address problems with the state's 2003 graduated driver's license law, which was intended to limit the number of teenage passengers in vehicles driven by 16- or 17-year old drivers. However, that law also restricted families from riding in the same car if a new 16 or 17 year old driver is behind the wheel. Public Act 05-54 removes the limit on immediate family passengers when the new driver is accompanied by at least one parent or guardian. It also increases, from 8 to 20 hours, the minimum amount of behind-the-wheel, on-the-road training a 16- or 17-year old must have before qualifying for licensure.

In addition, this new law prohibits a 16- or 17-year old licensed driver from driving from 12:00 a. m. through 5:00 a. m. unless he or she is traveling because of employment, school or religious activities, or medical necessity.

Cell Phone Ban

Public Act 05-159 bans the use of hand-held cell phones while driving. Beginning October 1, 2005, the legislation prohibits drivers from using hand-held phones unless they are communicating an emergency situation to an emergency response operator, hospital, physician's office or health clinic, ambulance company, or fire or police department. Under the legislation, violations are punishable as infractions, with fines up to \$100.

Signal Preemption Devices

Public Act 05-242 addresses a relatively new problem involving signal preemption devices. These are devices capable of changing a traffic control signal and are primarily used by police, fire and ambulance vehicles, in order to expedite their route to an emergency. Unfortunately, they have also been purchased by non-emergency personnel. The potential for traffic accidents and ability to delay emergency vehicles from reaching their destinations is sufficient reason to restrict their use to police and emergency vehicles in Connecticut and I supported this legislation as a member of the Legislature's Public Safety Committee and on the Floor of the House of Representatives.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Patients' Rights

Public Act 05-128 requires hospitals to notify each patient in writing, upon the patient's admission, of his or her specific rights under the hospital's conditions of participation in Medicare. Notification must also inform the patient on how to complain, including how to contact the Department of Public Health (DPH).

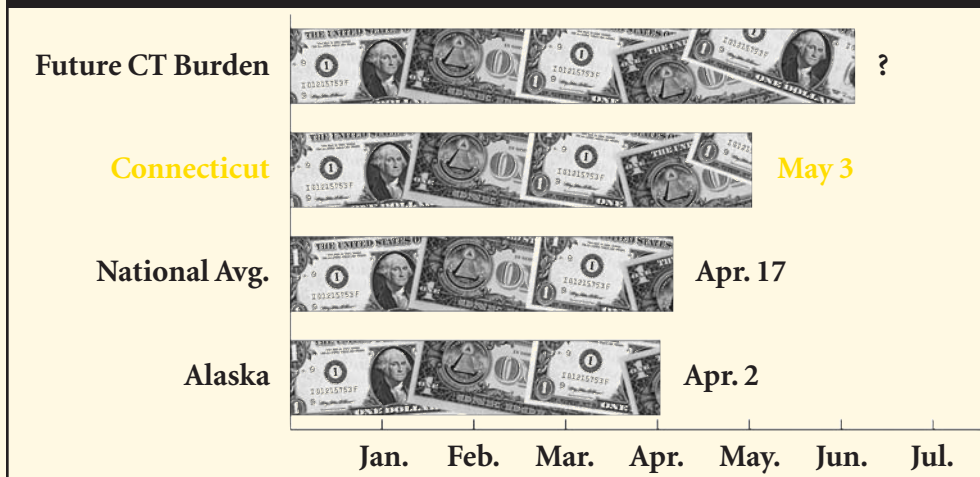
Coverage for Breast Cancer Screenings

Public Act 05-128 requires health insurance policies to offer ultrasound screening options for women with a family history of breast cancer. In 1999, the Legislature mandated coverage for mammograms. However, health authorities have noted that certain women can receive false negative results from a mammogram and their physicians often require additional testing for an accurate reading.

Prescription Drug Access

As Ranking Member (House Republican Leader) of the Legislature's General Law Committee, I helped draft Public Act 05-269, which creates a state-wide toll free telephone number to counsel and advise eligible persons on how to access more than 275 public and private patient assistance programs, including more than 150 programs offered by pharmaceutical companies. There are a number of prescription assistance programs available but they simply are not well-publicized. By establishing a centralized system for this information, we will help people access affordable prescription medications.

CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS WORK 123 DAYS OUT OF THE YEAR JUST TO PAY THEIR TAXES



GOVERNMENT REFORM

New Ethics Board

Recently, it has become clear that the existing configuration of the state Ethics Commission could not properly address alleged ethical misconduct by state officials. Public Act 05-183 abolishes the state's current nine-member State Ethics Commission (SEC) and establishes the Office of State Ethics (OSE) and a nine-member Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board as its successor. Establishing a completely new office, with better defined powers and structure, will help restore trust in state government.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Protection Against Identity Theft

I also helped draft Public Act 05-148, which allows consumers to freeze their credit report and requires businesses to inform the affected consumers if there has been a security breach involving their computerized personal information. The law prohibits a credit rating agency from releasing a frozen credit report, or any information in it,

without the consumer's express authorization. It authorizes most types of businesses to deem a credit application incomplete, and an insurer to deny an application, if it finds that a consumer's credit report is frozen.

Allowing Consumers To Import Wine

In May, the U.S Supreme Court ruled that that states cannot prohibit consumers from buying wine directly from out-of-state wineries. I helped draft Public Act 05-274, which addresses issues raised by the court decision, such as preventing minors from illegally being sent alcohol from out of state. I'm pleased that Connecticut residents now have additional options for purchasing wine.

SENIORS

Study of Elderly Housing Complexes

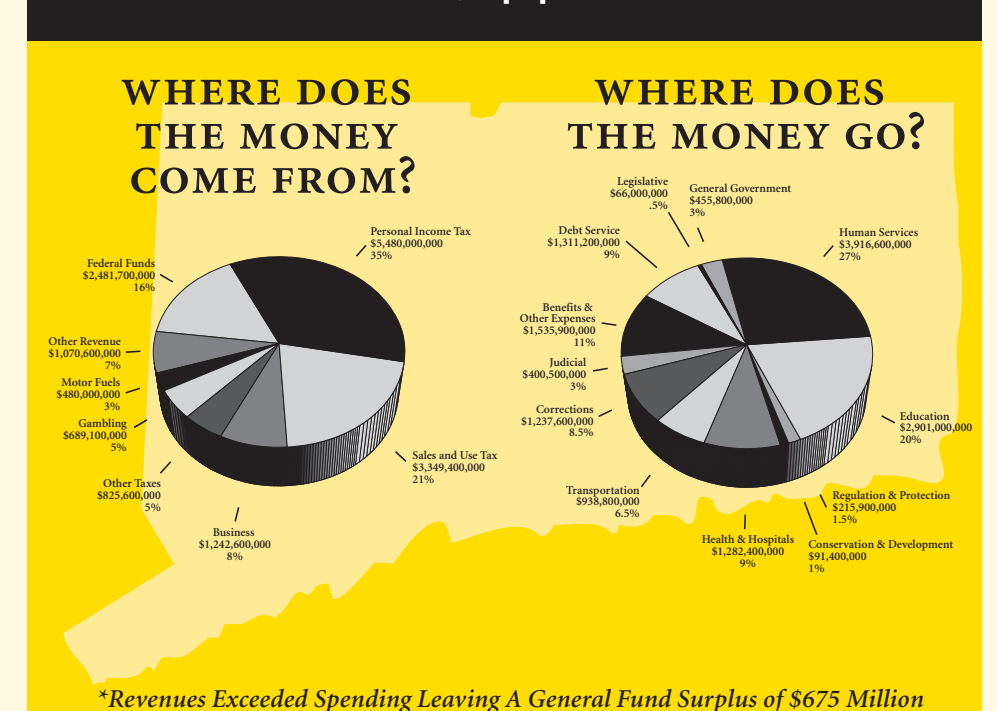
Public Act 05-239 will address concerns about state-assisted elderly housing projects. It requires state social service agencies to assist local housing authorities to identify and access their services and several agencies to develop plans detailing their outreach efforts, available services, and crisis intervention activities. The act also requires a comprehensive assessment of rental assistance needs for state-assisted elderly and disabled housing projects.

SPENDING AND TAXES

2005-2007 State Budget

While there were a number of good points in the 2005-2007 budget package that was approved this year, it also contained exorbitant spending increases (12 percent) and tax hikes (\$738 million). Based on a Statutory formula: Ansonia will receive \$13,858,565 in state funding, an increase of \$ 652,638; Beacon Falls will receive \$3,640,720 in state funding, an increase of \$173,922; Seymour will receive \$9,105,400 in state funding, an increase of \$311,477.

BUDGET ENDING JUNE 30, 2005 THE 2005 GENERAL FUND AND THE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND SPENDS \$14.4 BILLION



*Revenues Exceeded Spending Leaving A General Fund Surplus of \$675 Million